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THESIS

**THE MANSFIELD AMENDMENTS AND
THE U.S. COMMITMENT IN EUROPE, 1966-1975**

by

Péter Lázár

June 2003

Co-Advisors:

Donald Abenheim
David S. Yost

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**THE MANSFIELD AMENDMENTS AND
THE U.S. COMMITMENT IN EUROPE, 1966-1975**

Péter Lázár
Civilian, Hungarian MoD

B.A., MA., Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, 1998

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June 2003

Author: Péter Lázár

Approved by: Donald Abenheim
Co-Advisor

David S. Yost
Co-Advisor

James W. Wirtz
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout and beyond the Cold War the trans-Atlantic link has constituted a crucial factor in maintaining peace and stability in Europe and indirectly the whole world. The mutual defense commitment between Canada, the United States, and ten European states was formalized in the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949. This politico-military alliance – the most successful in modern history – was primarily based on three principles: (1) the community of values, (2) self-help and mutual aid, and (3) the collective defense of the member states’ territories.¹ Recent political developments in trans-Atlantic relations suggest that the first principle, namely the community of values, might have been undermined since the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. The rift between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany on the Iraq issue and the conduct of the war on terrorism, which eventually led to U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s distinction between “Old” and “New” Europe,² indicates that the community of values might not automatically guarantee the cohesion of NATO in the post-Cold War world. This thesis examines one of the indirect sources of current developments, the dispute over burden sharing.

The NATO Allies have engaged in several political, military and economic debates over the decades. Since the outset one of the major sources of conflicts between the United States and its European allies has been burden sharing. During the Cold War most of the European allies tried to exploit the fact that according to the North Atlantic Treaty the United States – the strongest military power in the West – was obliged to defend them in case of an outside attack. In spite of the reluctance to spend more than minimal amounts on military capabilities in most NATO European countries the issue did not become a major concern in the U.S. Congress between 1951 and 1966. It was only in the late 1960s and early 1970s that proposals – including the Mansfield Resolutions and

¹ See Articles 2, 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

² See Rumsfeld’s speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, 8 February 2003.

Amendments – were introduced in the Senate demanding a significant reduction in the number of U.S. troops in Europe.³

The two major objectives of this thesis are: (1) to explore the historical, political, economic and social factors behind the Mansfield Amendment, and (2) to analyze the relevance of the U.S. debates in the late 1960s and early 1970s as an analogy for possible future developments in trans-Atlantic relations.

The thesis seeks answers to the following questions: (1) Why did the issue reemerge in the late 1960s almost twenty years after the “Great Debate” that accompanied the establishment of the Alliance? (2) Is there any political and intellectual continuity between the U.S. non-interventionist forces in the 1930s and the early 1950s and the group led by Senator Mansfield? (3) What factors explain how Senator Mansfield’s radical proposition could almost prevail in the Senate? (4) To what extent was it purely a foreign policy issue, and to what extent was it a chapter in the long struggle for supremacy between the U.S. legislative and the executive branches? (5) What were the key arguments for and against the amendment? (6) How did the Administration eventually convince the Senate to reject the proposition? (7) Who played major roles in the Senate debate? (8) What factors might play similar roles in contemporary U.S. politics?

The thesis examines the hypothesis that political factors (both domestic and international) and the economic and social environment in the late 1960s and early 1970s were favorable to the political forces that wanted Americans to focus more attention on

³ This thesis is primarily based on J. E. Schwarz, “Senator Michael J. Mansfield and United States Military Disengagement: A Case Study in American Foreign Policy: The Majority Leader, his Amendment and his Influence upon the Senate” (University of North Carolina: PhD dissertation, 1977); Phil Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1985); Hubert Zimmermann, *Money and Security* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and The Mike Mansfield Papers 1903-1990 (Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, The University of Montana, Missoula).

domestic issues. During this period the Vietnam War brought disappointment to the American public and political elite, and the United States experienced protracted economic recession and social unrest. To some Americans it seemed that Western Europe showed insensitivity to America's agony.⁴ Moreover, with the development of détente in East-West relations in 1963, the international political situation seemed to be much more relaxed than in the previous decades. In these circumstances many U.S. Senators did not want to accept any longer the unwillingness of the rich Europeans to contribute more to the common defense. The Administration, however, firmly rejected the troop reduction proposals and defended the trans-Atlantic link as one of the guarantors of global stability.

Furthermore, the thesis seeks to explore the international and domestic factors that constitute continuities in U.S. foreign and security policy regarding trans-Atlantic relations. The debates about the Mansfield Resolutions and Amendment in the late 1960s and early 1970s constitute a useful source in identifying the various forces behind U.S. policy towards Europe.

The contemporary relevance of the issue derives from the fact that most of the elements responsible for the emergence of the Mansfield Amendment are still influential in making U.S. foreign and security policy, and this circumstance may lead to the reemergence of the debate in the near future. Some similarities in the situations in the early 1970s and today (including an ill-defined war, an economic recession, and an indifferent European attitude) suggest the potential relevance of the analogy. The thesis is based on the hypothesis that despite the radical changes in the global political setting some of the factors behind the emergence of the Mansfield Amendment still exist and might influence the formation of U.S. policy under certain political, economic and social circumstances.

⁴ Argyris G. Andrianopoulos, *Western Europe in Kissinger's Global Strategy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), p. 135.

The 1990s witnessed a booming U.S. economy and a lack of any visible direct threat to vital American security interests. However, the beginning of the new decade brought a significant economic recession and unprecedented strategic-scale terrorist attacks on U.S. targets (above all, the attacks on 11 September 2001). Suddenly, one of the new potential threats became reality and the United States found itself in an ill-defined war against terrorism. Although most countries have condemned the brutal attacks, even some of the friends and allies of the United States (especially the Europeans) have expressed disagreement with aspects of Washington's response to the challenge.⁵ While at this moment neither political nor economic considerations make it at all probable that the United States will withdraw its forces from Europe in the foreseeable future, the current circumstances suggest that it is timely and appropriate to analyze historical analogies that may throw light on this issue of crucial importance.

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter II provides historical background on the issue. It seeks to place Senator Mansfield's efforts in historical perspective, and to show continuities and discontinuities in American foreign policy approaches towards Europe. Chapter III describes the Mansfield Resolutions and Amendments. It reviews: (1) the debates, (2) the major participants, and (3) their arguments. Chapter IV analyzes the political factors behind the emergence and the conclusion of the debate. It includes both domestic (legislative-executive) and international (détente) considerations. Chapter V presents the economic and social aspects of the case. It explores general economic trends and the link between the huge deficit in the American balance of payments and the stationing of U.S. troops in Europe. The chapter considers the social aspects of the issue as well, including the civil rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations. Chapter VI assesses the validity of the analogy by comparing the situation in the early 1970s to the current one. This is important and relevant due to the genuine possibility of a similar debate in the near future. So far the different political and security priorities and the enormous capability gap have not caused any considerable clash between the United States and its European Allies, but serious problems might arise.

⁵ Richard Lambert, "Misunderstanding Each Other," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2003, pp. 62-74.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The unprecedented success of the United States during its short history might suggest that a straight road led from the unification of the thirteen former colonies to the globally engaged super-power. Its fast and relatively peaceful transformation from colonial status to a modern, powerful nation-state further reinforces this perception. In contrast with European states in which the modernization process came with violence and almost proved to be disastrous, America was able to become a modern, liberal state with fewer difficulties.⁶ Both domestic and external factors contributed to the comparatively peaceful and enormously fast modernization of the United States. The primary factors include the democratic American political system, with practically no feudal tradition, and of the lack of a rival state or states that could have challenged U.S. predominance in the Western Hemisphere.

The limited presence of violence did not mean, however, that the United States did not go through radical changes, and could not have pursued different paths. This can be well seen in foreign and security policy. The growth of its economic and military power led to increasingly intense debates on the role America should play in the global arena.⁷ Traditionally, U.S. foreign policy was limited to the Western Hemisphere, and sought to avoid any entanglement with European powers. In his farewell address George Washington asked, “[w]hy, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?”⁸ Despite the fact that by the early twentieth century the United States had become one of the biggest economic powers in the world,⁹ the tradition of avoiding

⁶ The American Civil War, 1861-1865, can be cited as a violent manifestation of the modernization process in the United States, in addition to various labor disputes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

⁷ John Lamberton Harper, *American Visions of Europe* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁸ The Farewell Address of President George Washington, 19 September 1796, available at <http://www.law.ou.edu/hist/washbye.html>.

⁹ Richard R. Nelson and Gavin Wright, “The Rise and Fall of American Technological Leadership: The Postwar Era in Historical Perspective.” in *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol. XXX (December

any entangling alliances with foreign (and especially European) states remained significant and provided a real alternative to enduring security commitments abroad until the Cold War.

This thesis focuses on the Mansfield Resolutions and Amendments, the last remarkable attempt to radically alter the course of U.S. foreign and security policy on the basis of American traditions. At first sight this case might appear to have purely burden sharing implications. The resolutions and amendments proposed substantial reduction in the number of U.S. troops in Europe, because (Mansfield argued) the Europeans did not contribute adequately to their own defense. Although Senator Mansfield's discontent with the behavior of the European Allies was the main motive behind his initiative, this case should be placed a wider historical context.

Since the beginning, American foreign policy has been influenced by specific historical, ideological, geopolitical, and economic factors. Eventually they resulted in a strong isolationist sentiment that peaked in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁰ The early historical experiences – namely, the subordinated situation of the colonies and the war of independence against Great Britain, the ideas of the Enlightenment and the puritan traditions that involved contempt for the European power politics, the geographical isolation, and the strong belief in free trade without any long-lasting political commitments – were determinants in the formation of U.S. foreign policy until the 1940s.

During and after World War II the long and strong isolationist tradition was weakened significantly. This did not mean, however, that only one approach remained. Within the so-called internationalist camp there were three significant positions represented by FDR, George F. Kennan, and Dean Acheson. Roosevelt and his followers were convinced that “Europe constituted the overriding problem of the twentieth century

1992) pp. 1931-1964.

¹⁰ Justus D. Doenecke, *Storm on the Horizon: The Challenge to American Intervention, 1939-1941* (Boston, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000).

and the United States had little choice but to try to solve it.”¹¹ FDR’s ultimate objective was the retirement of Europe from world affairs. However, he wanted to achieve this without American responsibility and entanglement. He put forward his “four policemen idea,” which meant that the four great powers (the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and China) would be responsible for the peace and stability of the world. According to John Harper’s account, Roosevelt held that only these powers “would be armed and would enforce peace on the basis of regional assignments.”¹² The modest status assigned to Europe was striking, for no states from Continental Europe were present as great powers in Roosevelt’s plan.

Opposed to Roosevelt’s ideas, George F. Kennan wanted to restore Europe’s centrality and autonomy through temporary U.S. engagement. He believed that, due to the overextension of the Soviet Union in East-Central Europe, Moscow would have difficulties in maintaining its power in the region. The West would have to do nothing more than pose permanent pressure on the USSR. He did not think in terms of military containment. Instead, he wanted to pursue “the political containment of a political threat” that would lead to an eventual settlement with Moscow.¹³ The declared objective of containment was the gradual change of the Soviet Union. Kennan did not want the United States to disperse its resources by its entanglement in Europe. He neither supported Roosevelt’s “one world” policy (collaboration with Moscow), nor the “two worlds” concept (perpetual confrontation with the Soviet Union). Instead he had a tripolar approach in mind.¹⁴ His vision was based on the creation of a strong and independent Europe that would constitute the third power-center in the world besides the United States and the Soviet Union. He was definitely against the emergence of an Americanized Western Europe and a Communist Eastern Europe; this outcome would represent a continent which had completely lost its independence.

¹¹ John Lamberton Harper, *American Visions of Europe* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 34.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 107.

¹³ Mr. “X,” “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs*, 25, no. 4 (July 1947), pp. 566-82, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 183. “X” was the pseudonym of George F. Kennan.

¹⁴ Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

The third, and eventually prevailing, approach is linked to Dean Acheson, the father of the new trans-Atlantic security system. He thought that the antagonism between the Soviet Union and the United States could not be interpreted simply as an issue of balance of power alone. He was convinced that “the clash was between a system that...safeguarded freedom of choice and a system that did not.”¹⁵ The establishment of NATO, Acheson noted, made the United States a European power. His approach towards Europe was based on his idea of a “pattern of responsibility.” He argued that “We must act with the consciousness that our responsibility is to interests which are broader than our immediate American interests...We must operate in a pattern of responsibility which is greater than our own interests.”¹⁶

Due to certain political, geostrategic, and economic factors the United States had to make an important decision in the late 1940s. The United States had to decide whether to give significant financial and military aid to the Europeans, which might lead to a permanent U.S. engagement in Europe, or take the risk of leaving Western Europe to the mercies of the Soviet Union. The latter could have led to the realization of the greatest fear of the Anglo-Saxon world, namely the domination of the “Eurasian Heartland” by an antagonistic power.¹⁷

The dilemma of the Western European states was no less difficult. While they needed American financial and military aid against the threat of further Soviet expansion, they did not want to be dependent on a power far from Europe. Close political, economic, and military cooperation between the Western European states might have offered a way out of this dilemma, but the imminent Soviet threat, the fear of a German revival, and severe economic problems prevented them from considering this option seriously. Both the Americans and the West Europeans realized that without massive American involvement the freedom of Western Europe was in danger. With the announcement of

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 276.

¹⁶ Acheson, press conference, June 29, 1951, DAP-HSTL, box 69, quoted in ibid. p. 280.

¹⁷ This fear was based on Halford Mackinder’s theory that had been elaborated in his book *Democratic Ideals and Reality* in 1919.

the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 and the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in April 1949, the United States assumed this task and committed itself to help free peoples in their fight against Communism. The Truman Doctrine and the Washington Treaty constituted a turning point in the relationship of the United States and Europe. The Atlantic Alliance made the United States the leading power in Western Europe.

The ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty in the U.S. Senate on 21 July 1949 was not, however, without intense debates. Despite the strong support that Senator Arthur Vandenberg, the Republican chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations provided, and the guarantee that nothing in the treaty "increases or decreases the constitutional powers of either President or Congress or changes the relationship between them,"¹⁸ some Republican senators, especially Senator Robert Taft, Senator Kenneth Wherry and Senator Arthur Watkins, fiercely opposed the treaty. They were uneasy about Article 5 and Article 3 of the treaty. They believed that collective defense would link the United States too closely to Western Europe and wanted to make sure that it would not limit American sovereignty and establish a permanent military commitment in Europe. The North Atlantic Treaty was approved by a vote of 82 to 13 on 21 July 1949,¹⁹ but some questions remained in connection with its implementation.

The fall of mainland China to Communism, the first Soviet atomic explosion, and especially the outbreak of the Korean War changed the situation dramatically. These events made the Truman Administration believe that a European war might be imminent. Without significant conventional forces in Europe the deterrence and defense protection offered by the North Atlantic Treaty seemed inadequate. On 9 September 1950 President Truman announced his decision for "substantial increases in the strength of the United States forces to be stationed in Western Europe in the interest of the defense of that area."²⁰

¹⁸ Quoted in Phil Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), p. 24.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

The reaction of the Republicans in the Senate was critical. The fact that the President had committed U.S. troops to Korea without Congressional approval gave the mostly partisan debate another dimension, that of the institutional struggle between the legislative and the executive branches. Senator Robert Taft was the leading figure of the Great Debate, as it was later called. He delivered a 10,000-word speech on American foreign policy on 5 January 1951. According to the *Ohio Republican*, the external consequences of the American policy were less important than its potential effects on the homeland. With views comparable in some respects to the non-interventionist arguments in the 1930s, he expressed concern that the emergence of a garrison state would ultimately decrease freedom in the United States, and put enormous political and economic burdens on the country. In his speech of 5 January 1951 he emphasized that

[t]he key to all the problems before this Congress lies in the size of our military budget ... It is likely to determine whether we can maintain a reasonably free system and the value of our dollar, or whether we are to be weakened or choked by Government controls which inevitably tend to become more arbitrary and unreasonable.²¹

Instead of a significant U.S. military presence in Europe he preferred a limited and temporary deployment, and he wanted to focus on the defense of North America and the Western Hemisphere.²²

With his speech Senator Taft initiated the Great Debate and defined its key issues: 1) burden sharing, 2) optimum U.S. strategy, and 3) authority over foreign policy. The debate proved that the issue had much to do with the basic principles that the United States was based on. The aversion to a large government and standing military as imminent threats to American freedom was one of the central elements of the debate. Partisanship and institutional struggle were both present. In contrast with the debates in the late 1960s and early 1970s the Republicans attacked the U.S. commitment in Europe

²¹ Taft, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 53.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 54.

and the executive branch as too strong. Republican views significantly changed in the 1950s and 1960s, most importantly due to Eisenhower's presidency. The Great Debate ended with the victory of the Truman Administration, and signaled the beginning of a long period of bipartisan foreign and security policy.

The political and military engagement of the United States led to a complex and unprecedented situation in which a non-European power assumed the main bulk of responsibility for the defense of states far away from its shores. On the one hand, it resulted in reluctant European Allies, who most of the time sought to exploit the situation and "free ride" on the American commitment. On the other hand, it made the Europeans extremely sensitive concerning the reliability of the very same U.S. commitment. This ambivalent state of the European Allies became more pronounced when a radical change took place in the vulnerability of the United States after the launch of Sputnik in 1957, and when a substantial reduction in the number of U.S. troops stationed in Europe was proposed in the U.S. Congress in the late 1960s.

During the Great Debate in 1951 and the troop reduction debates in the late 1960s and early 1970s senators arguing against considerable U.S. involvement in Europe used not the isolationist rhetoric from the 1930s, but most of all Kennan's approach. They wanted a strong and "independent" Europe that was able to assume most of the burdens of its own defense. This can be seen in Senator John Stennis's remarks during the Great Debate: "I favor carrying out the commitments of the Atlantic Pact, but unless European nations show quick and conclusive proof of their economic and military support ... we would have nothing left to do but withdraw our assistance."²³ Mansfield shared the same opinion, as indicated in the following statement:

The relationships of the Western nations require refinement, redefinition, and restatement at this time. There remains in them, at this late date, too

²³ Stennis, quoted in 'Poll Indicates Congress Views on Aid to Allies Sharply Divided', *New York Times*, 7 January 1951, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 61.

much that is drawn from the one-sided dependency on the United States which was the reality twenty years ago but is no longer the case ... The key is a greater contribution of and a more active leadership in European affairs by the Europeans themselves.²⁴

²⁴ *Postscript to Report on Czechoslovakia, NATO and the Paris Negotiations of September 1968: Report of Senator Mike Mansfield to the Committee on Foreign Relations, December 1968*, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 158.

III. THE MANSFIELD RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

A. THE DEBATE (1966-1975)

The late 1960s and early 1970s witnessed a series of attempts by Senator Mike Mansfield, the majority leader in the Senate, to bring about a “substantial reduction” in the number of American troops in Europe. In 1966-1970 he introduced three identical Senate Resolutions on the issue. The Resolutions declared that “with changes and improvements in the techniques of modern warfare and because of the vast increase in capacity of the United States to wage war and to move military forces and equipment by air, a substantial reduction of the United States forces permanently stationed in Europe can be made without adversely affecting either our resolve or ability to meet our commitment under the North Atlantic Treaty.”²⁵

While the resolutions were not legally binding, they constituted a constant pressure upon the Administration and a warning sign to the European Allies. On 31 August 1966 the first resolution (Senate Resolution 300) was introduced. Its support was remarkable, in that Mansfield persuaded thirty senators to serve as co-sponsors. On 19 January 1967 his second attempt was even more successful. Forty-four senators supported his Senate Resolution 49 as co-sponsors. The announcement of the Trilateral Agreement²⁶ on 28 April 1967, which included the reduction of 35,000 U.S. troops in Europe, was warmly welcomed by the Senate. Mansfield regarded it as the first step in the adjustment he had long been advocating. On 1 December 1969 Mansfield introduced Senate Resolution 292, which was identical to his former proposals.

²⁵ Senate Resolution 292, 1 December 1969, quoted in James Edmond Schwartz, *Senator Michael J. Mansfield and United States Military Disengagement from Europe* (Ph. D. dissertation, 1977), p. 466.

²⁶ The Trilateral negotiations took place among the United States, the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany in 1966-67. The basic objective was to reach an agreement on the further adjustment of the burden-sharing pattern of the three states. The final agreement included small reductions in the number of U.S. and U.K. troops in the Federal Republic, and a West German pledge to help stabilize the international monetary structure.

In May 1971 the whole debate changed dramatically. Senator Mansfield introduced an amendment to the Selective Service Bill (HR 6531) which required a 50 percent reduction in the number of U.S. troops deployed in Europe by the end of 1971. It was indeed a dramatic change compared to Mansfield's earlier actions. Unlike a resolution, an amendment could have the force of law. If the Mansfield Amendment had prevailed in the Senate and the House of Representatives, the President would have had to decide whether to veto or sign it. This proposal's radical elements (a 50 percent reduction within less than one year) might have jeopardized NATO's military posture and the stability of the East-West stalemate in Europe. A majority of senators was nonetheless inclined to approve the legislation, and only an intensive lobbying campaign with the active participation of "elder statesmen" (former Secretaries of State, Secretaries of Defense, High Commissioners for Germany, NATO Commanders, and Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) could ensure the defeat of the proposal. Their bipartisan united stand was necessary to kill the amendment. Ironically, the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev also helped the Administration defeat Mansfield's proposal by announcing – in the middle of the debate – his interest in negotiations on mutual force reductions in Europe. After this announcement most senators began to consider the Amendment a "tragically ill-timed initiative."²⁷

At the beginning of the debate the Administration adopted Henry Kissinger's position and rejected all the initiatives that sought consensus with Mansfield. According to Kissinger, "If any of the many compromise variations were on the books, the NATO force improvement program, however modest, would be out the window; our allies would lose heart; and the negotiations with the Soviet Union on mutual reductions were likely to atrophy. We would be on the road to Vietnamizing Europe."²⁸ Though this tactic had the advantage of preventing any future obligation on the part of the Administration, it also involved potential dangers. On the one hand, the introduction of a consensus-based and much less radical amendment could have provided a real alternative for those senators (mostly from the Democratic Party) who supported Mansfield's Amendment, thus

²⁷ Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

²⁸ Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), p. 942.

isolating the majority leader. On the other hand, it could have definitely won most Republican senators' whole-hearted support. In the event Kissinger's tactic proved to be successful, and all the compromise-based amendments and the original Mansfield Amendment were defeated relatively easily.²⁹

After the vigorous debate of 1971 and the convincing victory of the Administration the issue did not disappear from the Senate agenda. On the contrary, the pressure further increased and culminated in 1973. In that year Mansfield introduced his proposal again with little modification. It recommended a 40 percent reduction in the number of U.S. troops overseas within three years. Though the Senate on 25 September 1973 passed the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, which required a total offset from the European Allies of the American balance of payments deficit resulting from the deployment of U.S. forces in Europe, Mansfield did not drop his amendment. The Senate voted on the proposal the next day and to the great surprise of the executive branch it passed with a vote of 49 to 46. Parliamentary procedure, however, helped the Administration.³⁰ A second vote –six hours after the first one – defeated the amendment 51 to 44. The 1973 battle over U.S. troops in Europe did not come to an end with the second vote. On 27 September 1973 – just one day after the Mansfield Amendment was defeated – the Senate passed the more moderate Humphrey-Cranston Amendment, which mandated a reduction of 110,000 troops (23 per cent) overseas.

Senator Mansfield did not give up his attempts to achieve the reduction of U.S. troops overseas at this point. In June 1974 he introduced another amendment on the issue, but senators supporting the Administration easily defeated it. At this time the majority leader's proposal was not less radical than his earlier ones. His amendment required a reduction of 125,000 troops overseas by the end of 1975. The Senate dealt with the troop reduction issue in 1975 as well, but Senator Mike Gravel's amendment to reduce the

²⁹ The Mansfield Amendment was defeated by 25 votes in a 61 to 36 roll call on 19 May 1971.

³⁰ The Mansfield Amendment was itself a substitute for an amendment proposed by Alan Cranston. Parliamentary procedure required a second vote – on the initial Cranston Amendment as modified – before the measure could be formally attached to the defense procurement bill.

number of troops overseas by 200,000 brought a humiliating failure.³¹ After 1975 the issue was absent from the Senate agenda.

B. MAJOR PARTICIPANTS

The prominence of the troop reduction issue in the late 1960s and early 1970s was closely linked to one influential individual, Senator Mike Mansfield. He was a Democratic senator from the state of Montana. His general acceptance in the Senate is demonstrated by the fact that he was the longest serving Senate majority leader (1961-1977) in American history. Moreover, he was the longest serving U.S. Ambassador to Japan (1977-1989), and also Professor of Far Eastern History at the University of Montana, Missoula, a fact which suggests his foreign policy orientation. In the early 1950s he equated the Soviet Union to militant totalitarianism, and considered the defense of Europe crucial and vital to American national interests. After Stalin's death in 1953 he gradually began to think about the possibility of a modus vivendi between the two antagonistic super-powers. He reevaluated his position on the defense of Western Europe, calling for more balanced burden sharing within NATO. With the recovery of the European economies and the development of détente, his conviction became stronger that a reassessment of some crucial aspects of trans-Atlantic relations should be made. As noted above, from 1966 to 1975 he introduced a series of legislative proposals demanding substantial U.S. troop reductions in Europe. Though his resolutions and amendments were all rejected, his struggle for troop withdrawal was not without results. He generated a debate that resulted in significant legislation (e.g., the Jackson-Nunn Amendment) on the issue. Moreover, Mansfield's proposals meant that the U.S. Administration could negotiate from a better position with the European Allies.

The support for Senator Mansfield's resolutions and amendments for troop withdrawal mostly came from senators of his party. This does not mean, however, that all the Democrats in the Senate voted for his proposals. Senator Henry Jackson, a Democratic member of the Armed Services Committee, was one of the leading figures of

³¹ The amendment was rejected by voice vote in the Senate.

the campaign against the troop withdrawal. Aside from some liberal Democrats (such as Henry Jackson, Edward Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, and Adlai E. Stevenson), it was mostly conservative Democratic senators from the South (such as James Allen, Harry Byrd, James Eastland, and Sam Nunn) who voted together with the Republicans. From 1972, when he became a member of the Senate, Sam Nunn of Georgia began to assume the leading role in the Democratic Party in opposing Mansfield's policy. Because it was more practical and pragmatic, Nunn's approach proved to be more acceptable to the Administration, the Senate, and the European Allies.³²

The Grand Old Party was a reliable ally of both the Johnson and Nixon Administrations in opposing a substantial troop withdrawal from Europe. Senator Jacob Javits of New York and Senator John Stennis of Mississippi led the counter-attack against Mansfield's attempts. The Republicans, who were considered the party of the isolationists in the 1930s and 1940s, gradually became the guardians of American global engagement in the 1950s primarily due to the presidency of an internationalist Republican, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Few Republican senators supported Mansfield's proposals. With the exception of Milton Young of North Dakota – a real isolationist – the Republicans who supported the Amendments did not vote with the intention to establish a Fortress America.³³

Although there were supporters of modest troop reductions overseas within the Administrations during this period (and President Johnson actually reduced the number of U.S. troops in Europe by 35,000), the Johnson Administration and especially the Nixon Administration fiercely opposed Mansfield's proposals. During Nixon's presidency Henry Kissinger assumed the leading role in defeating the troop withdrawal legislation. Besides the lobbying activities the Administration pursued in the Senate, it heavily relied on the support of the "elder statesmen," as in the 1971 debate. Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson suggested that Kissinger use the support of the still

³² See Jackson-Nunn Amendment in 1973.

³³ Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

influential statesmen who had been either present at the creation of the post-war security system or had assumed high positions afterwards.³⁴ Thus, the anti-troop withdrawal forces were transformed into a bipartisan alliance, a fact which significantly affected the outcome of the Senate votes.

The debate included foreign participants as well. It was basically about U.S. security commitments in Europe, and the extent to which the European Allies were contributing to NATO's deterrence and defense posture. Germany was the most important European state in the debate for two reasons: 1) most of the U.S. troops were stationed there, and 2) it had crucial importance in East-West relations. The United Kingdom and France were involved indirectly in the debate too. The importance of the former came from its large military presence in Germany. France's decisions in 1966 to leave NATO's integrated military structure and to demand the withdrawal of U.S. forces from France were interpreted by some U.S. senators as signs that the French did not want U.S. troops in Europe and considered them no longer necessary to counter the Soviet threat. While at the level of declaratory policy the Europeans could help the Nixon Administration defeat Mansfield's proposals, their actual policies, including defense spending – though not intentionally – constituted significant support for those who wanted U.S. troop withdrawals. As noted earlier, the Soviets also played a significant role in the debate. The debate cannot be correctly understood without considering Soviet-American relations.

C. ARGUMENTS IN THE DEBATE

The debate lasted almost ten years (1966-1975), but the arguments of both sides did not change dramatically. Senator Mansfield summed up as follows his and his supporters' position on the issue:

[T]he 250 million people of Western Europe, with tremendous industrial resources and long military experience, are unable to organize an effective

³⁴ Kissinger, op. cit., p. 942.

military coalition to defend themselves against 200 million Russians who are contending at the same time with 800 million Chinese, but must continue after 20 years to depend upon 200 million Americans for their defense.³⁵

Mansfield considered the burden sharing imbalance within NATO ridiculous and unjust. He and his supporters argued that the United States was overburdened both internally and externally and could not afford to finance directly or indirectly the defense of the rich Western European states. He completely agreed with the constituent who wrote to him as follows:

I also understand the [E]uropean attitude towards the [A]merican economy as I have relatives in positions of authority on my wife's side here in Berlin. Looking down on America and Americans has become more prevalent since the monetary crisis.³⁶

At the same time Mansfield believed that the size of the U.S. military presence in Europe was not justifiable in the era of détente. He considered a Soviet attack on the Central Front highly improbable. He also rejected the U.S. and NATO strategy of flexible response as unsound. In his view nuclear war was inevitable in case of a Soviet attack due to the large number (approximately 7,000) of U.S. nuclear warheads deployed in Western Europe and especially in the Federal Republic of Germany.³⁷ Thus, Senator Mansfield could accept neither politically nor militarily the size of the U.S. troop presence in Europe.

Mansfield's opponents used six major arguments for the maintenance of the status quo. First, they held that the presence of U.S. troops in Europe was in the vital interest of

³⁵ Mansfield's statement on 23 January 1970, quoted in Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

³⁶ Vern F. Kardell's letter to Senator Mansfield on 13 May 1971, Series VIII, Box 72, in Mansfield Archive, Mansfield Library, Missoula, MT. Subsequent references in this thesis to Series and Box numbers concern the Mansfield Archive.

³⁷ Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

the United States. They were stationed there not only to defend Western Europe, but also indirectly to defend the United States. As President Nixon pointed out in a speech at the Air Force Academy in June 1969,

We should never underestimate the appeal of the isolationist school of thought. Their slogans are simplistic and powerful: “Charity begins at home.” “Let’s first solve our own problems and then we can deal with the problems of the world.” ... I hold a totally different view of the world, and I come to a different conclusion about the direction America must take... If America were to turn its back on the world, a deadening form of peace would settle over this planet – the kind of peace that suffocated freedom in Czechoslovakia. The danger to us has changed, but it has not vanished. We must revitalize our alliances, not abandon them.³⁸

The second argument was prepared to refute the charge that the European Allies did not take their defense seriously. These states directly faced the Soviet threat, and they all knew that the main theatre of combat would be situated in their territories in a war with the Soviets in Europe.

As a third argument the rationale behind the strategy of “flexible response” was described. In the age of nuclear parity the large Soviet conventional forces could not be offset mainly by nuclear weapons, and a considerable number of U.S. troops should therefore be stationed in Europe.

The fourth argument attacked the unilateral aspect of the Amendment. The United States should not reduce the number of its troops unilaterally, because these American troops could be more advantageously reduced within the framework of a mutual force reduction treaty with the Soviets.

³⁸ President Nixon’s Address at the commencement exercises at the Air Force Academy, 4 June 1969, Series XVIII, Box 22.

The fifth major argument warned that such a U.S. move would lead to fragmentation among the European Allies, and probably would result in their “Finlandization” – that is, their de facto subordination to paying political deference to Moscow.

Finally, the adversaries of the Amendment pointed out that the balance of payments deficit was only in small part the result of maintaining U.S. troops in Europe. The portion attributable to the U.S. military presence in Europe constituted only one-sixth of the whole deficit. Therefore the proposed troop withdrawal could not decrease the deficit significantly.³⁹

³⁹ Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-218.

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IV. POLITICAL SITUATION

A. INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The late 1960s and the early 1970s witnessed significant changes in international politics. Certainly, most of them had direct or indirect effects on trans-Atlantic relations, yet the emergence of détente and the escalation of the war in Vietnam were probably the most important. After the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 a considerable relaxation of tensions began to develop between the Soviet Union and the United States. As a first step a U.S.-Soviet "hot line" was set up to ensure a direct and reliable communications link between the leaders of the two states.

In 1963 a partial test ban treaty was signed by the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom. In 1969 strategic arms limitation talks began between the two superpowers. Furthermore, mutual and balanced force reduction (MBFR) negotiations started in Vienna on 30 October 1973. These negotiations took place in a multilateral framework – including not only the Central European states, but also states with military capabilities deployed there, such as Canada, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States. (France had forces in the area, but refused to participate in the negotiation.) In addition, several neighboring states were present at the talks as "special participants." However, the bloc-to-bloc nature of the talks assured the primacy of U.S. and Soviet influence during the negotiations.⁴⁰

Parallel with the initiation of the MBFR talks, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe began its negotiations in 1973. The CSCE Helsinki Final Act, signed in 1975 by 35 nations (all the European states except Albania, plus the United States and Canada), focused on security agreements and arrangements between the two camps and brought about a new status of unprecedented significance to human rights issues in international relations.

⁴⁰ Andrianopoulos, op. cit., p. 143.

The relaxation of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union had considerable effects on the European countries, especially France and the Federal Republic of Germany. In 1966, the French President, Charles de Gaulle, announced the French withdrawal from the integrated military structure of NATO and demanded that all foreign forces and installations be removed from France by 1 April 1967. De Gaulle wanted to show that France had regained its full sovereignty as a great power and was not dependent on the assistance of the United States. He could do this for three major reasons: 1) since 1960 (the date of its first nuclear weapons test) France had been a nuclear power; 2) by the 1960s the French economy had fully recovered from the devastation of World War II; and 3) the development of détente provided a good chance for establishing an independent foreign and security policy.

The French behavior, however, deepened West German feelings of insecurity and underlined West Germany's dependence on the United States. A détente between the two superpowers nonetheless made the West Germans suspicious towards the Americans for they were afraid that Washington and Moscow were going to decide on the future of West Germany without asking them. Eventually, this fear led to a more vigorous pursuit of *Ostpolitik* as an official policy of the Federal Republic of Germany, particularly after Willy Brandt became Chancellor in 1969. In the troop withdrawal debate in the U.S. Senate the French and German behavior became one of the major issues for advocates of the Mansfield Resolutions and Amendments. They could argue, as Hubert Zimmermann put it, "Europe not only did not need but actually did not want a direct commitment from the United States."⁴¹

The escalation of the Vietnam War also contributed significantly to the emergence of the troop withdrawal issue in the Senate. The United States was involved in a war far away from Europe. Moreover, the security situation in Europe seemed to be calm due to the easing of tensions between the two camps. In that situation the Americans

⁴¹ Hubert Zimmermann, *Money and Security* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 176.

expected support from the European states in a war that was being fought – in their understanding – for the containment of the global Communist threat. Without any sense of global responsibility many of the Europeans were skeptical and even critical towards U.S. engagement in the Vietnam War. It seemed to many of the U.S. senators that while the United States was overburdened in the fight against Communism, the European Allies were “free riding” within NATO. Many senators were convinced that the time had definitely come for a substantial reduction in the U.S. military presence overseas, especially in Europe.

Crucial developments in the international scene, however, worked against a substantial unilateral troop withdrawal from Europe. Four major factors should be mentioned here: (1) the fear of the development of a differential détente in Europe,⁴² (2) the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, (3) the hope for a mutual and balanced force reduction treaty with the Soviets, and (4) the negative effects of the 1973 Yom Kippur War on U.S.-Soviet relations. All of these elements contributed to the defeat of the Mansfield proposals.

The most spectacular intervention came from the Soviet Union. In the middle of the Senate debate on the Mansfield Amendment in May 1971, Leonid Brezhnev declared his readiness to start negotiations over mutual troop reductions in Europe. In his memoirs Henry Kissinger called Brezhnev’s speech in Tbilisi “a manna from heaven,” because it effectively ensured the defeat of the Amendment. In Kissinger’s words: “Here was a way out for uneasy supporters of Mansfield as well as for his Administration opponents. Both could unite behind the proposition that the imminence of negotiations made unilateral reductions of American forces untimely.”⁴³

⁴² This may be defined as a détente process in Europe completely separated from the American-Soviet relationship and leading to divisions in NATO.

⁴³ Kissinger, op. cit., p. 946.

B. DOMESTIC POLITICS

The debate on the proposals Senator Mansfield introduced in the U.S. Senate can be interpreted as a chapter in the long struggle for supremacy over foreign policy issues between the executive and legislative branches. In the words of Phil Williams, “It represented the beginnings of the Congressional revolt against the predominance of Cold War policies, and the dominance of what would later be called the ‘Imperial Presidency.’”⁴⁴ By the late 1960s many members of Congress were convinced that the concentration of power in the President’s hands had become excessive, and that this was a major source of political (both foreign and domestic), economic, and social problems. In their view the real remedy for the problems would be the restoration of the balance between the executive and the legislative branches. They held that Congress should have a much bigger role in the definition of U.S. foreign and security policy.

Senator J. William Fulbright, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, was one of the leading proponents of a bigger Congressional role in the formation of U.S. foreign and security policy. As with Senator Mansfield, the Arkansas Democratic senator’s position on the role Congress should assume in foreign affairs had undergone a considerable transformation. During the Great Debate in 1951 Fulbright supported the Administration’s case and wanted to limit the role of the Congress.⁴⁵

At first sight one might speculate that the change was due to the fact that, while in the early 1950s a Democratic President (Harry S. Truman) was in power, in the late 1960s a conservative Republican (Richard M. Nixon) came to power. The facts, however, only partly back up this speculation. Fulbright’s fight for the assertion of a greater Congressional role in foreign policy had started years before the Republican President was elected in 1968, owing to dissatisfaction with President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Vietnam policy. The so-called Fulbright Resolution, which sought the restoration of the

⁴⁴ Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-143.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

balance between the executive and legislative branches, was introduced in Congress in July 1967. It is true, however, that Nixon's election made the institutional struggle more intense due to partisanship.

While Senator Mansfield was proposing a substantial reduction of U.S. troops stationed in Europe, Senator Fulbright was launching his attack on the "Imperial Presidency." In the Summary of Activities of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations of the 91st Congress (1969-1970) may be found this statement from Senator Fulbright:

The legislative history of the Committee on Foreign Relations during the 91st Congress somewhat resembles an iceberg... Most of the Committee's efforts were devoted to redefining the Constitutional relationships between the Executive and Legislative Branches in the field of foreign policy. For many years the role exercised by the Committee on Foreign Relations was that of the unquestioning advocate of policies and programs submitted to the Senate by the Executive Branch of the Government... In short for many years the Committee got along with the Executive Branch of the Government because it went along. This role has been changing. The Committee has become aware that it is no service to the nation to accept without question judgments made by the Executive... The Committee has during this Congress for the first time in decades sought to exercise a truly independent critical judgment of proposals on foreign and defense policy matters. The cozy relationship has been replaced by questions.⁴⁶

It was not only Senator Fulbright who fought against the powerful Presidency in the Senate. Together with Senator Charles Mathias, Senator Mansfield himself introduced a resolution, Senate Joint Resolution 166 on 8 December 1969, which sought to repeal the Formosa Resolution, the Resolution on the Middle East, the Cuba Resolution, and the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. Furthermore, the resolution called for the establishment of a joint committee of the Congress to study the termination of the national emergency proclaimed by President Truman on 16 December 1950.⁴⁷ The Majority Leader, Senator Mansfield, received a significant number of letters supporting his initiative. One of the

⁴⁶ Series XVIII, Box 22.

⁴⁷ Series VIII, Box 53.

many letters said: “Congress must assume congressional responsibility for its part in the formulation of foreign policy. Such a resolution as you seek to introduce into Congress...[is] intrinsic for the reestablishment of Congressional power in the field of foreign relations.”⁴⁸

The change in the form of Mansfield’s proposals in 1971 – from the non-binding resolution to the legal amendment – indicated Senator Mansfield’s aim to launch a frontal attack on the role the Administration played in foreign policy. By approving a radical amendment – like the Mansfield Amendment – the Senate could substantially influence the formation of U.S. foreign and security policy. It is probably no accident that Mansfield introduced his second amendment in the same year (1973) that Congress passed the War Powers Resolution, which significantly limited Presidential power over the use of the military abroad. The U.S. political atmosphere in the early 1970s is authentically captured in Congressman John Melcher’s statement on 21 November 1973.

The House faced the most historic test of this century in defense of its constitutional powers when confronted with the President’s veto of the War Powers bill. For a generation we have floundered in an atomic era misconception that the Presidency must be allowed to act single-handedly on this most grave proposition – the commitment of our Nation’s youth, vigor and wealth to war, including foreign wars not in our own national defense but the brutal, unnecessary conflicts of other nations. We have seen our youth trapped in a military draft to settle an Asian conflict over political ideology, draining many of our young people of their zeal and patriotism for their own country. We have also drained our economy, causing us to lose our competitive position in world trade, forcing dollar devaluations and resulting in inflation that has undermined the security of older citizens and all others living on fixed incomes. From crib to crypt, all ages of Americans have suffered. They suffer now and will continue to suffer in the future from a misguided policy of warmaking which benefits only those who make fortunes from keeping millions in uniform and providing the armaments and materials for war.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Letter of Rev. Paul Treat II to Senator Mansfield, 17 February 1970, *ibid.*

⁴⁹ Office of Congressman John Melcher, 21 November 1973, Series XVIII, Box 8.

This statement vividly shows the atmosphere in which Senator Mansfield introduced his Resolutions and Amendments. As the Majority Leader in the Senate, Mansfield was well aware of the institutional struggle underway between the Administration and Congress. Though his troop withdrawal proposals were directed against a particular policy of the Administration, they also constituted a general attack on the power of the executive in foreign and security policy.

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V. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SITUATION

After the long prosperity that followed World War II the U.S. economy began to experience serious problems by the mid 1960s. Due to domestic and international factors the early 1970s witnessed “stagflation,” a parallel increase of inflation and unemployment.⁵⁰ This was an unprecedented phenomenon in the United States, and had significant effects on society. This thesis focuses only on the international factors behind the crisis situation. The growing deficit in the U.S. balance of payments was one of the most spectacular indicators of the challenges the United States had to face in the international economic system. On the one hand, government spending abroad remained high (economic aid, military bases and troops, limited wars, and military and economic subsidies to allies and other security partners). On the other hand, the West European and Japanese economies had recovered from the destruction of World War II and imposed serious competition on the United States. Thus the balance of payments deficit had two major sources: the costs of global military commitments and since 1971 an unfavorable balance of trade. The escalation of the Vietnam War further increased the deficit. The anti-European sentiment in the United States was significantly strengthened in 1965, when President de Gaulle attacked the American gold reserve. In the first quarter of the year the U.S. Treasury lost \$3.244 billion in gold and another \$1.198 billion in the April to June quarter, mostly due to the French move.⁵¹

The following excerpt from a confidential memo to President Lyndon Johnson at the end of 1967 illustrates the significant financial problems the Administration had to face.

The last quarter is unnatural and would reverse as soon as we show strength and wisdom and stop the speculative buying of gold out of our

⁵⁰ Arthur M. Johnson, ed., *The American Economy: An Historical Introduction to the Problems of the 1970s* (New York: The Free Press, 1974) p. 66.

⁵¹ Zimmermann, op. cit., p. 178.

supply. The results for the fourth quarter demonstrate the victory of the speculators over the financial community. Continuation of this will lead to more loss of control and collapse of public confidence [and] both [would be] politically damaging and economically disastrous.⁵²

As noted earlier, the U.S. military presence overseas was one of the sources of the American balance of payments problems. West Germany was the most problematic country in Europe in this regard. The U.S. troops stationed in the Federal Republic of Germany considerably contributed to the outflow of dollars. In the early 1960s the United States sought to conclude an agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany for a full financial offset of the foreign exchange cost of U.S. troops in Germany. On 24 October 1961 the first offset agreement was signed by the parties: the West Germans agreed to purchase American weapons in the amount of the foreign exchange cost of U.S. troops in the country. However, the agreement was limited to only a two-year interval. Though new offset agreements were concluded in the late 1960s (e.g., the Trilateral Agreement in 1967), they could not solve the problem. The West German capacity for absorbing new weapon systems was limited, and the recession of 1966-67 – though modest in its economic effects – had a strong impact on the West German public.⁵³ The issue troubled West German-U.S. relations throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, and strengthened the anti-European sentiment in the U.S. Senate.

Senator Mansfield did not consider offset agreements with the Federal Republic of Germany satisfactory. In June 1968 he made the following remarks:

The recent agreement between the United States and West Germany on offsetting the foreign exchange cost of American troops stationed in Germany is unacceptable, of little value, and, in my opinion, is, at best, only a stop-gap proposal. ... The entire cost of \$800 million required to

⁵² Confidential memo No. 5. via Walt Rostow to President Johnson, 1967, Series XVIII, Box 22.

⁵³ Zimmermann, op. cit. p. 193.

maintain 400,000 troops and dependents in Germany should be borne by the West German Government if they want to retain a sizeable U.S. force in their country.⁵⁴

The costs of America's global political and military commitments evidently constituted a more attractive target than the unfavorable trade balance for senators concerned about the balance of payments. Many argued that reducing the U.S. military presence overseas could solve the problem of the balance of payments and at the same time put an end to the unjust burden sharing pattern within NATO.

The late 1950s and the 1960s brought enormous changes in American society. The members of the baby-boom generation became teenagers and started to revolt against their parents' world. They were born just after World War II and brought up in a prosperous and self-confident country. They did not have the prudish attitudes and uncertainties of their parents' generation, which had grown up in the 1930s. The baby-boomers were confident enough to disregard centuries-old taboos, and to become the followers of liberal ideas. In the words of Edward Shils, "It was a powerfully asserted demand by adolescents and by young men and women that they be free to find and form their life-styles as impulse and taste prescribed, without regard for traditional restraints and the discipline of ambition and convention."⁵⁵ These young people attended colleges and universities in much higher numbers than any previous generation. They were provided the chance to study and be educated, and they considered it natural. Moreover, they wanted to extend these possibilities to all citizens, regardless of social and racial background.

The mid 1960s witnessed the initiation of President Johnson's Great Society program, which aimed to eliminate poverty and improve the quality of life for all

⁵⁴ Senator Mansfield's remarks on 14 June 1968, Series XXII, Box 41.

⁵⁵ Edward Shils, "American Society and the War in Indochina," in Anthony Lake, ed., *The Vietnam Legacy: The War, American Society and the Future of American Foreign Policy* (New York: New York University Press, 1976), p. 43.

Americans. The program passed by the Congress in 1965 included Medicare, federal aid to education and the arts, and the establishment of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. As the Great Society program shows, this decade was characterized by a sense of urgency. Political leaders recognized that the amount of poverty was huge, and some believed that it could be speedily and definitively eliminated.⁵⁶

The radical changes in society did not leave the situation of black people untouched. The civil rights movement peaked in the late 1950s and 1960s, and it brought significant results. Probably the most important initial step was the 1954 Supreme Court decision that declared the segregation policy in the South illegal. Throughout the 1960s the civil rights movement fought for the equality of black people in all respects with the rest of society.

The Vietnam War worked as a catalyst and further radicalized demands for social changes. The anti-Vietnam War movement was not exclusively a movement of university and college students, but had links to the civil rights movement as well. It gave a significant impetus to the revolt against the values of the WASP middle and upper class.⁵⁷

The confusion of American society was compounded by the mass media, especially television. Television reporters stressed what was most passionate: riots, demonstrations, and military operations. As Edward Shils remarked, “their interpretation of important events made a profound mark on American society in the 1960s: it was a sense that American society was degenerating into an uncontrolled disorder which authority could not halt.”⁵⁸ In such a situation it is no wonder that significant portions of American society wanted to focus their attention on domestic issues rather than

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 43.

⁵⁷ WASP stands for “white Anglo-Saxon Protestant,” a category used by some sociologists to describe American elites during this period.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 49.

international ones, and that they supported a policy of gradually winding up American political and military commitments overseas, especially in Europe.

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VI. CONCLUSIONS

The emergence of the U.S. troop withdrawal issue in the late 1960s and early 1970s became possible on the basis of certain political, economic, and social circumstances. It was a period in which the tensions between the two antagonistic superpowers eased considerably. At the same time, however, the Vietnam War was escalating, and the U.S. economy and society experienced serious problems. During this period the bulk of American society was to some degree in turmoil. Tens of thousands of young Americans had been killed in a protracted conflict far away from U.S. soil. To many Americans it was an incomprehensible war with an ill-defined purpose. Inflation decreased considerably the purchasing power of the dollar, and the unemployment rate mounted higher and higher.

To some of the Congressional leaders – especially Democrats – the reassertion of the role of Congress would provide remedies for the problems of the United States. The Administration was blamed for America's overburdened and overstretched condition. A new institutional “revolution” was expected to restore the balance between the executive and the legislative branches. Without any doubt the Mansfield Resolutions and Amendments constituted a part of this institutional struggle.

Senator Mansfield attempted to use the favorable international situation (*détente*) as a tool for altering the foreign policy of the Johnson and especially the Nixon Administrations. In his view, the relaxation of East-West tensions could be used to promote a readjustment in U.S.-European relations and specifically in the burden sharing pattern of the North Atlantic Alliance. His attempts were supported by the public discontent with the Vietnam War. However, he could not persuade the Senate to seek a substantial reduction in the number of U.S. troops in Europe. The Administration's argument that the strategic balance in Europe was at stake eventually convinced the majority of senators that such a troop withdrawal would send a dangerous message to the

Soviets. Only within the framework of a mutual and balanced force reduction could stability be maintained in the Old Continent.

The debates in the late 1960s and early 1970s could in some circumstances constitute an analogy for a future scenario. This thesis does not intend to explore fully the relevance of the Mansfield Resolutions and Amendments as an analogy. It only intends to draw attention to some of the similarities between the period examined and current circumstances and trends. Burden sharing still constitutes one of the greatest problems within NATO. U.S. and European capabilities and strategic objectives tend to be diverging in the Alliance. The Europeans do not want to sacrifice their social achievements in order to be able to decrease the huge capability gap that exists between them and the United States. Moreover, demographic trends indicate that the Europeans will have to face a growing social burden in the form of higher pension and health care costs. This will have a direct impact on the determination of security strategies. For example, in some circumstances the United States may choose not to avail itself of the limited military support that the European Allies can offer. Washington might rather rely on much more comfortable and in the short-term more effective ad hoc alliances.

The post-11 September 2001 war on terrorism (like the Vietnam War in the late 1960s and early 1970s) may work as a catalyst in this process. The serious differences between the United States and some of its European allies that were brought to light by the Iraqi war might be warning signs. Even Western democracies may have significant differences among themselves. Both the Americans and the Europeans should prepare themselves for such events, and they should develop improved crisis management techniques.

Furthermore, the economic and social challenges (including recession and immigration) that the United States might have to face will be favorable for those forces who want the United States to disengage from Europe, and focus more attention on

domestic issues. Though the shock and patriotic feelings that followed the brutal terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 united the American public and political elite, a prolonged crisis in the Middle East with considerable American engagement might undermine this unity. Due to the spectacular increase in Presidential power since the September 2001 terrorist attacks, the emergence of serious problems might easily lead to another institutional struggle between the Administration and the Congress.

The troop withdrawal debates in the late 1960s and early 1970s indicate that the non-Achesonian options of limited internationalism (as Kennan recommended) or of no U.S. security responsibilities in Europe (apparently FDR's preference) were attractive to some U.S. political leaders even during the Cold War. Though this fact could be revealed only in certain circumstances, it is mainly rooted in the one-sidedness of the Achesonian approach. This approach created an artificial situation in which the European allies could have a "free ride" (or at least a low-cost option) in meeting their defense needs. The Western European states – defended mainly by the United States – were not forced to build operationally effective military establishments even after their economies had completely recovered from the destruction of World War II. For some Americans the current situation in NATO – a huge trans-Atlantic capability gap, different threat assessments, and serious economic and social problems – might reinforce the non-Achesonian options of internationalism, notably in the context of the war on terrorism.

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